

The Pacific Northwest Regional Contingency Planning Process

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The Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP) is in its seventh release. The Plan serves as both the Area Contingency Plan and the Regional Contingency Plan for the northwest states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. It includes two US Coast Guard Captain of the Port Zones (Puget Sound and Portland) and the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Inland Zone. Federal, state, tribal, and local government representatives as well as representatives from commercial, non-profit, and private concerns continue to drive this planning effort from the ground up. For Washington, this document functions as the Statewide Master Plan for planning and response to oil and hazardous substance releases. All federal, state, tribal, and local response organizations that are members of Regional Response Team 10 or the Northwest Area Committee use this plan for responses to oil and hazardous materials spills, drills, and exercises. The NWACP is updated yearly through several methods. Stakeholders (local, state and federal) submit comment at the three RRT/NWAC meetings held each year. There is also direct comment to the RRT/NWAC through the it's website <http://www.rrt10nwac.com/> . Stakeholders and members also direct change in the NWACP through participation in the several working groups that look at particular areas of spill response. The Geographical Response Plan (GRP) working group is one of the backbones of the plan. It organizes and develops the GRPs. GRPs are the response strategies and priorities for spill response within the first 24 hours. The strategic plan is a ten year forecast of objectives, strategies and tactics set by the RRT/NWAC Executive Committee to guide the working groups. This plan will provide the direction and continuity for future growth and changes to the plan and spill response in the Pacific North West.